

[FRL-5695-3]**Peer Review of CASTNet****AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The United States Environmental Protection Agency announces the meeting of a peer review panel which is constituted to review and analyze the EPA draft report, Examination of CASTNet: Data, Results, Costs, and Implications and the accompanying Recommendations on Changes to Operational Monitoring in CASTNet and Directions for Future Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring Research. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 1997, at the Holiday Inn Arlington at Ballston, 4610 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and adjourn by 5 p.m. The meeting is open to the public. Any member of the public who would like to comment on the draft report should contact Dr. Robert E. Menzer, Office of Research and Development (8701), USEPA, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460, telephone 202-260-5779, Email: menzer.robert@epamail.epa.gov, for a copy of the report. Written comments should be submitted to Dr. Menzer. Members of the public who choose to make brief comments on the report at the meeting should also contact Dr. Menzer.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In 1986, EPA's Office of Research and Development began to operate the National Dry Deposition Network, consisting of 39 monitoring sites designed to assess the status and trends in dry deposition of sulfur and nitrogen species, primarily in the high-deposition regions in the eastern U.S. Following passage of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990, the NDDN was expanded and renamed the Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNet). As of 1996, there are 51 operational sites in the network. Each site collects weekly filter pack samples which are analyzed for SO_x, NO_x, and sulfate, nitrate, and ammonium ions, as well as micrometeorological and other data.

The first systematic analyses of the resulting monitoring data were conducted beginning in the fall of 1996 by scientists at ORD's National Exposure Research Laboratory. This timing allowed the first access to quality-assured data from 1995, during which SO_x emissions decreased by 13% in response to Phase I reductions in sulfur emissions called for in the CAAA.

The purpose of the analyses was to examine the performance of the monitors and to seek opportunities to increase the cost-effectiveness of the network. The analyses included reviews of the quality of the database and the costs of the individual data collection components; comparisons between deposition velocities derived from the multi-layer model using meteorological data collected on site with deposition velocities measured using an eddy correlation technique; evaluation of alternative methods of calculating deposition velocities that do not require on-site data collection; analysis of factors affecting variability in deposition velocity at two different spatial scales; exploration of the effect of reducing the number of sites on apparent regional patterns of ambient sulfur dioxide concentrations; evaluation of the ability to detect trends in ambient concentrations and deposition velocities at individual sites and groups of geographically contiguous sites; and comparisons of dry deposition estimates with wet deposition estimates from nearby wet deposition sites. The results of the analyses are presented in a draft report, Examination of CASTNet: Data, Results, Costs, and Implications. The purpose of this review is to examine the soundness of the underlying science and the appropriateness of the analytical approaches described in this document.

Beginning in FY 1998, EPA is proposing to transfer operation of CASTNet from the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR). The transition from a research-oriented effort to an operational monitoring program presents an opportunity to make changes in current network operations and to assess alternative directions for future acid deposition research. The Recommendations on Changes to Operational Monitoring in CASTNet and Directions for Future Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring Research makes such recommendations to OAR and ORD, based on policy questions provided by OAR and informed by the analyses in the accompanying draft report. The other purpose of the peer review is to solicit the reviewers' advice on the reasonableness of the various proposed modifications to the CASTNet and future research directions, given the current state of data analysis and interpretation.

Dated: February 19, 1997.

Joseph K. Alexander,

Acting Assistant Administrator for Research and Development.

[FR Doc. 97-4967 Filed 2-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION**Sunshine Act Meeting**

Pursuant to the provisions of the "Government in the Sunshine Act" (5 U.S.C. 552b), notice is hereby given that at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 25, 1997, the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation met in closed session to consider matters relating to the Corporation's corporate, supervisory and administrative enforcement activities.

In calling the meeting, the Board determined, on motion of Vice Chairman Andrew C. Hove, Jr., seconded by Director Joseph H. Neely (Appointive), concurred in by Director Nicolas P. Retsinas (Director, Office of Thrift Supervision), Director Eugene A. Ludwig (Comptroller of the Currency), and Chairman Ricki Helfer, that Corporation business required its consideration of the matters on less than seven days' notice to the public; that no earlier notice of the meeting was practicable; that the public interest did not require consideration of the matters in a meeting open to public observation; and that the matters could be considered in a closed meeting by authority of subsections (c)(2), (c)(2), (c)(4), (c)(6), (c)(8) and (c)(9)(A)(ii) of the "Government in the Sunshine Act" (5 U.S.C. 552b (c)(2), (c)(4), (c)(6), (c)(8) and (c)(9)(A)(ii)).

The meeting was held in the Board Room of the FDIC Building located at 550-17th Street, NW., Washington, DC.

Dated: February 25, 1997.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Valerie J. Best,

Assistant Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-5146 Filed 2-26-97; 11:18 am]

BILLING CODE 6714-01-M

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION**Notice of Agreement(s) Filed**

The Commission hereby gives notice of the filing of the following agreement(s) under the Shipping Act of 1984.

Interested parties can review or obtain copies of agreements at the Washington, DC offices of the Commission, 800